



# COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

EXECUTIVE SEARCH PROVIDED BY STRATEGIC GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

# THE COMMUNITY



Ideally situated on the rolling plains of eastern Williamson County, the City of Taylor, Texas, is home to 17,700 residents who enjoy a laid back, semi-rural atmosphere with the world-class amenities of Austin within easy distance. Williamson County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, with a population estimate of over 545,000. The City of Taylor covers approximately 19 square miles and is located only eight miles east of the 130 Toll Road, at the intersection of U.S. Highway 79 and State Highway 95, just 40 minutes from Austin. Taylor has benefited tremendously from the astronomic growth of the Austin metro area but has maintained its unique, small town charm.

Taylor's beginnings are tied to the railroads, cattle, and cotton. The City was originally settled in the mid-1800s as the railroads expanded into Texas. Because of its location on one of the major cattle trails, Taylor became a shipping point for cattle, and the fertile soil in the area made it ideal for cotton production. Taylor's downtown is recognized as a National Historic District by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Efforts are underway to redevelop and revitalize the downtown and attract new businesses and restaurants to the City.

A number of large, historic homes, which reflect a time of affluence in a young Taylor, dot the area. Many of these homes have been maintained

by generations of the same family, while others have been faithfully restored and modernized. Taylor's connection to the railroads continues today through the modern Amtrak station located in downtown Taylor. The community takes great pride in its ethnic diversity that includes Czech, Polish, German, English, Scotch-Irish, Swedish, Black, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and other ancestry. Taylor has a reputation for being an extremely friendly and welcoming community. The City's ethnic diversity is reflected in its reputation for great barbecue restaurants and delicious kolaches, Slavic pastries that are extremely popular throughout the region.

The City is proud of its parks system, which includes three major parks and more than eight miles of hike-and-bike trails. The Taylor Regional Park and Sports Complex is a state-of-the art recreation facility and nature preserve which includes a variety of tournament-quality athletic fields, basketball courts, a covered pavilion, two modern playscapes, and a hike-and-bike trail. The park also features an innovative nature conservation project and a six-acre lake that provide excellent opportunities for outdoor education. The newly renovated Williamson County Expo Center is a central location for a variety of sporting, spectator, and recreational events, including Texas rodeo. The expanded facility had its grand opening in November 2016.



Taylor Independent School District (TISD) serves over 3,200 Taylor students. The area is also served by a number of institutions of higher learning, including the East Williamson County Higher Education Center (located in Hutto), a multi-institutional teaching center that boasts partnerships with Temple College, Texas State Technical College, Texas Tech, and Concordia College, along with Legacy Early College High School, which is located in downtown Taylor. Students can earn an associate's degree at the same time as a high school diploma. The Austin campus of the University of Texas is only 30 minutes away. A number of other colleges and universities are located in the Austin area.

Baylor Scott & White Hospital in Taylor is a 25-bed critical access hospital with a newly renovated 24-hour emergency room service, as well as radiology, laboratory, and surgery services. Baylor Scott & White Clinic provides pediatrics, women's healthcare, cancer screening, office surgery, orthopedic care, and occupational medicine to the City's residents. Twenty-five hospitals and one children's hospital are located in Greater Austin, totaling more than 3,000 hospital beds and 13,000 physicians and nurses.

## GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

The City of Taylor operates as a council-manager form of government under a home rule charter. The City is governed by a five-member Council with four members elected from districts and the fifth member elected at-large. Council Members serve three-year terms, and the Mayor is elected from among the five members. The City Council appoints a professional City Manager, City Attorney, and Municipal Judge. The City Manager is appointed to be the chief administrative officer of the City for any term, condition, and compensation deemed acceptable to the City Council. The current City Manager is Isaac Turner who was appointed to the position in September of 2014.

The City Manager oversees an organization with 154.5 full-time equivalent employees and an operating budget for FY 2017-2018 for all funds of \$27.9 million. The City is very strong financially and has an "AA-" bond rating.

### Council Goals 2015 - 2020

Economic Vitality • Streets/Infrastructure • Quality of Life

The City is organized into a number of departments, including Police, Fire, Development Services, Public Works, Finance, Library, General Services, Human Resources, City Clerk, Main Street, and Public Information, and operates the Taylor Municipal Airport. Solid waste services are provided to the City through a private contractor. Taylor has established a Municipal Drainage Utility System which allows the City to collect a fee to address drainage related issues in the community, including localized flooding, emergency operations, and the cost of providing infrastructure and facilities that permit the safe drainage of storm water. Taylor's long-term water supply is provided from Lake Granger through a 50-year contract with the Brazos River Authority (BRA). The City also operates a 4 MGD wastewater treatment plant.

### MISSION:

To be a productive, fiscally responsible organization that takes proactive steps to ensure economic growth and the safety, well-being, and success of Taylor residents and the growth of business. Our vision for Taylor is to be a vibrant and diverse community.





## GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

CONTINUED

Taylor has adopted the Type “A” economic development sales tax and has established the Taylor Economic Development Corporation (TEDC) to administer the tax. TEDC owns two industrial parks, one of which has been fully developed. The City Council has recently adopted a Transportation User Fee which provides funding for increased street maintenance and reconstruction.

## ABOUT THE POSITION

Under the direction of the City Manager, the Communications Manager manages public information communications, which include media relations and publicity activities to inform the public; to foster civic involvement and heighten awareness for City activities, services, and programs; to coordinate activities designed to provide external and internal audiences with current information regarding all aspects of City operations and services; and to support/lead marketing and public relations activities to create and maintain a favorable public image of the City of Taylor.

### Essential duties include:

- Provide organizational and strategic support through development and implementation of proactive goals, objectives, policies, and priorities related to marketing and communications programs.
- Provide communications and media relations support to City management and Council, including coordinating key messages, talking points, media Q&A, columns, letters, and speeches.
- Serve as a resource in identifying potential public relations issues and collaborate on strategic solutions.
- Serve as the media representative of the City with print, broadcast, and online media; serve as a spokesperson for the City in media interviews as needed; provide media relations support to City management and Council; coach staff in media response; maintain current media contacts database; work with media outlets to encourage favorable coverage of events; and plan and host press conference events.
- Create and distribute news releases, website news items, social media posts, cable channel content, video content, fact sheets, and other forms of communications to foster involvement and heighten awareness for City services, programs, and initiatives.
- Write, edit, and coordinate the design, production, and distribution of a monthly newsletter, electronic newsletter, and other City publications or communications.



## ABOUT THE POSITION CONTINUED

- Manage all social media channels for the City, coordinate social media plans, create and curate content for publishing, and advise City management and Council on social media best practices.
- Manage the City's website/content management system and mobile application and serve as the point of contact for website changes and additions.
- Assist other departments with press releases, special events planning and coordination, photography, videography, and other related media activities and develop talking points for public speaking events.
- Serve as the City liaison to the Taylor Marketing Partnership.
- Provide crisis communications support for emergency management events, including print, broadcast, and electronic.
- Collaborate with City management and Council on ways to enhance communications to public officials and identify opportunities to support organizational initiatives and develop communications materials and programs to promote and publicize activities.
- Attend and represent the City at community functions, open house and community meetings, civic organizations, and governmental groups.
- Develop and manage the budget for marketing, public relations activities, communications, and advertising for the City in close collaboration with City management.
- Plan, manage, and provide support for pre-Council and Council Chamber audio-visual systems and room set up and coordinate and maintain records for recording city board and commission meetings and other audio video production and broadcasting.



## IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Taylor seeks a visionary and creative professional to be its new Communications Manager. The Communications Manager will work closely with the City and community to help develop a strategy for communications with the public, marketing and branding the City and its programs and services and developing plans that are positive, effective, and consistent. The ideal candidate will be a collaborative team builder who is committed to excellence in customer service, dedicated to helping the City realize its vision and goals, and focused on public engagement.

Utilizing a wide range of information, including statistics and community input, the Communications Manager will develop marketing plans that create a brand for the City that is aligned with its mission, vision, and values. A savvy social media strategist with a deep understanding of the local media market, the new Communications Manager will function at a high level in an environment of continuous learning and should keep abreast of current developments in the field. It will be important for the Communications Manager to stay informed of new and emerging trends in communication media and technology and remain familiar with all social media platforms used by local governments. A confident and proactive multi-tasker who is able to function at a high level, work with a great degree of independence, and manage multiple projects simultaneously will be successful.





## IDEAL CANDIDATE CONTINUED

The ideal candidate will be a relationship builder with a collaborative and cooperative attitude and will establish and maintain effective and productive working relationships that balance team and individual responsibilities. The ideal candidate will exhibit objectivity and openness to others' views, put the success of the team above his/her own interests, and contribute to building a positive team spirit. The Communications Manager will handle all issues with tact and diplomacy and offer assistance and support to co-workers to maintain a harmonious work environment.

This position has frequent contact with City departments, other governmental agencies, public and private organizations, the general public, and professional associations. The Communications Manager must be able to deliver public presentations effectively. The chosen candidate should be a talented writer who possesses excellent verbal and written communication skills, with an emphasis on journalistic standards. A proven track record of engaging the public and experience doing media outreach to improve engagement with local government issues are preferred.

It will be important for the Communications Manager to always behave with courtesy and sensitivity when dealing with the public. The Communications Manager will handle difficult, sometimes emotional, customer situations and must respond promptly to customer needs. The Communications Manager should be a skilled critical thinker who can gather and analyze information and develop alternative solutions as needed, resolving problems as quickly as possible. Customer feedback should be used to improve service and promote quality.

The Communications Manager will assist with special events in coordination with other City departments and organizations. Excellent project management skills, with the ability to prioritize and organize competing needs, meet commitments and deadlines, and remain calm under intense pressure, will be essential. The Communications Manager should have an understanding of how the job relates to others and the City as a whole, making the best use of available financial and staff resources to ensure success.



# EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in business administration, public administration, public relations, journalism, social sciences, marketing, communications, or a related field and three years of increasingly responsible experience in public relations, journalism, or marketing are required. Any equivalent combination of experience and training that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities will be considered.



# COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is approximately \$65,000, depending on qualifications. In addition to a competitive salary, the City provides a generous benefits package which includes comprehensive medical coverage, life insurance, disability, retirement (mandatory TMRS at 7%:1.5 to 1 and two voluntary 457 plans), paid vacation, paid sick leave, and holidays.



# APPLICATION PROCESS



Please apply online at: <http://bit.ly/SGRCurrentSearches>

For more information on this position contact:

**Lissa Barker, Senior Vice President**  
Strategic Government Resources  
[lissabarker@governmentresource.com](mailto:lissabarker@governmentresource.com)  
817-266-0647

This position is open until filled. To view the status of this position, please visit:  
<http://bit.ly/SGRCurrentSearches>

The City of Taylor is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a comprehensive background check.



## RESOURCES

**City of Taylor**  
[ci.taylor.tx.us](http://ci.taylor.tx.us)

**Public Information/Communications**  
[www.ci.taylor.tx.us/630/Public-Information](http://www.ci.taylor.tx.us/630/Public-Information)

**Taylor Economic  
Development Corporation**  
[tayloredc.org](http://tayloredc.org)

**Chamber of Commerce**  
[taylorchamber.org](http://taylorchamber.org)

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